

Daniel's "70 Weeks" – Part 1

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*Analyses of the "70 Years" Babylonian captivity
spoken of by Jeremiah 24:9–121 & 29:4–10, and the
"70 Weeks" Determined for Israel in Daniel 9:24–27*

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NOTE: Part 2 contains a columnar layout of the chronology, kings, and events covered herein. It is available as a separate document.

INTRODUCTION

From the sacred Hebrew/Christian Scriptures we know the life of the Hebrew prophets Jeremiah and Daniel spanned a very interesting and difficult period for the Jewish people of Israel. Following, I provide a historical look at the events which spanned their lives—and even on into the future beyond their times. This will lay the groundwork for the final analyses of the prophecies described in Jeremiah 24:11, 29:10, and Daniel 9:24–27. Lastly, I will ultimately compare the actual events of history with the prophetic Scriptural record preserved in the divinely inspired record.

THE THREE OVERLAPPING PROPHECIES UNDER CONSIDERATION

Jeremiah 25:9–12; Babylonian Rule over Jerusalem To Last 70 Years

Jeremiah 25:9–12

- 9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.
- 10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.
- 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
- 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

The Analysis

This prophecy focuses on Babylon and *all the nations* inhabiting the land with "*this land*," i.e. the Kingdom of Judah and its capitol Jerusalem serving as a point of reference. The remarkable points are as follows:

First, in verse 9 the Lord said Nebuchadnezzar is the chosen "servant" whom He was going to bring against Israel and all the other nations—some of which would suffer "perpetual" destruction.

Next, verse 11–12 says all the nations in this region would serve Babylon for 70 years. Afterwards, God promised to punish the king of Babylon, and the nation itself, and cause it to suffer repeated destruction.

The main point of this passage, which is pertinent to our overall study, is the specifically stated prophecy that Babylon was to exercise total control over the entire described region. However, after subjugating the region for 70 years—with Judah as a reference—Babylon's rule was to be permanently broken.

Jeremiah 29:4–10; the Captivity And Return Of The Jews Of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 29:4–10

- 4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;
- 5 Build ye houses, and dwell *in them*; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;
- 6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.
- 7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.
- 8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be *in* the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.
- 9 For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.
- 10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

The Analysis

This passage focuses on the people of Israel who were to have previously lived in Jerusalem but would later be taken away captive into Babylon.

Verses 4–7 reveals that the Lord had instructed the Jews who were to be taken into Babylon not to resist being taken into captivity. Instead, they were to make the best of the situation and prepare for the duration. If they would do so, God promised

the captives they would enjoy productive lives and increase in number during the interim.

In verses 8–9, the Lord warns those taken captive into Babylon not to listen to the false prophets, which kept saying God was not going to send them to Babylon while He chastened the nation of Israel. False prophecies of this nature would naturally have led some of the courageous to resist Nebuchadnezzar's advances in futility.

The last and the most significant point, which is also pertinent to our overall study, is found in verse 10. Here, the Lord promised that he was going to return the displaced Jews back to Jerusalem after they have been held captive in Babylon for 70 years.

Daniel 9:22–27; the Jewish Return to Jerusalem, the Building of the Temple, and The Walls and Street of the City Are Rebuilt, And Lastly, The Messiah Is Cut Off

Daniel 9:24–27

- 22 And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.
- 23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew *thee*; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.
- 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
- 25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
- 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
- 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The Analysis

This passage is the central focus of this study and needs the most explanation.

First, in verses 22–23 the angel Gabriel informs Daniel he has come because of his supplication. In 9:2–3, Daniel said he had been making supplication concerning the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies as explained above. And, verse 23 specifically says the commandment actually came forth the moment

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Daniel began his supplications. Thus, Gabriel was saying that the decree to return the captive Jews of Jerusalem from Babylon had just been issued. As you will later see, historical records indicate this decree was actually issued by Cyrus, King of Persia in 536 B.C.

Next, verse 24 literally indicates that God had planned for 7 specific events to occur over a period of time defined as "70 weeks." The Hebrew expression, שִׁבְעִינֵי (shâbûwâ), translated *weeks* here is actually a proper passive participle meaning *sevened*. This expression is actually derived from שָׁבַע (shâba) which is a prime root meaning to be complete—or to *seven* oneself. And, this latter expression is used only as a denominative form of שִׁבְעָה (shib`âh) which is a prime cardinal number simply denoting a week of *seven*. Thus, Gabriel told Daniel the said events to follow would occur over a period of time being 70 X 7—or simply 490 in length.

Since the language here is using familiar terms, it is not wrong to think of 70 weeks denoting 490 *days*. However, one must also understand the proper concept of a day when it is used in prophetic reference to future events such as is used here, and by another prophet named Ezekiel who was contemporary with Daniel.

Ezekiel 4:5–6 shows that God's time reference using prophetic days can actually mean each day represents one year.

Ezekiel 4:5–6

- 5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.
- 6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: **I have appointed thee each day for a year.** [Emphasis mine]

Using this standard of each day representing one year, Daniel's 70 weeks of 7's most likely denotes 490 prophetic days that actually refers to 490 prophetic years.

The remainder of Daniel 9:24 also names seven events that are to happen specifically to the Jews and to the city of Jerusalem. They were enumerated as follows.

1. Finish the transgression.
2. Make an end to sins.
3. Make reconciliation for iniquity.
4. Bring in everlasting righteousness.
5. Seal up the vision.
6. Seal up the prophecy.
7. Anoint the most Holy.

What each of these actually means should become apparent as we progress.

Daniel 9, verse 25 states that a commandment was going to go forth causing Jerusalem to be *restored*. It also says the newly rebuilt city would survive up unto

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and through the time of the "Messiah the Prince." This statement is further clarified in the next verse, verse 26. Notwithstanding, verse 25 also says the amount of time that would pass from when the commandment will have first been given to *restore* the city—to the time the city would be officially considered rebuilt—would be 7 weeks of 7's or 49 prophetic days representing 49 prophetic years. In addition, verse 25 also says for 62 weeks of 7's (*i.e.*, 434 prophetic days representing 434 prophetic years) that both the walls of the city and the street would be built again and survive through some very troublesome times.

For a point of clarification for our Jewish friends, verse 26 says that at the conclusion of the 62 weeks of seven periods, the Messiah would be *cut off*—but not for Himself. The Hebrew expression translated 'Messiah' in verses 25 and 26 is מָשִׁיחַ, (**mashiyach** [*maw-shee'-akh*]), which is a male singular adjective for 'anointed one'. Moreover, the expression translated "cut off" in this verse means to be *killed*. The same expression is used in Genesis 9:11 where God promised that He would never again destroy all flesh from off the earth by a flood. These 62 prophetic weeks, plus the previous 7 represent 69 weeks of seven periods, *i.e.*, 483 prophetic years.

Verse 26 goes on to say something about the temporary demise of Jerusalem and the "sanctuary," which is another expression for the Jewish Temple. It also describes an indeterminate period of time that would take place between the fulfillment of the 69th and 70th weeks. Again, the Messiah being cut off, *i.e.*, or killed, would signal the end of the 69th week. After that, a flood—or rather, a large army of people—would eventually destroy the city and the "sanctuary." Sometime after that, an evil "prince" would arise who would be descended from the people that will have actually destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple sometime after the death of the Messiah. The passage also indicates that after the destruction of the city and the Temple, Israel and the world would suffer ongoing destruction and wars until the time of the "end."

The time of the end would culminate with the end of the last week of years. Again, Gabriel told Daniel that there were actually 70 weeks of years and events determined for his people and Jerusalem. Accordingly, after the Messiah was killed, one more week of years would play out sometime later and Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed. Daniel's prophecy goes on to describe the significant events that will mark the beginning of this last week of 7 prophetic years. This event and some specific details of this week are described in verse 27.

Verse 27 describes the activities of the future coming unnamed "prince" mentioned in the previous verse. That means, once the Messiah would be cut off, and the city and sanctuary would be subsequently destroyed later on, at some *unknown* point in the future this evil "prince" would arise from among the nationality of the people who actually destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. It goes on to say the future prince would then proceed to make an overpowering accord, which is supposedly to be in effect for the length of one prophetic week. However, in the middle of the week—or, after 3 1/2 prophetic years—this prince will break the accord and put an end to the "sacrifice and the oblation." This means the prince's accord will have been made with Israel, which is likely to have another Temple standing and in use when the accord is broken.

Thus, Daniel was told that it is likely that another Temple is yet to be built at some time in the future after the city and sanctuary would be destroyed after the death of the Messiah. One could say that another Temple would indeed be necessary to

facilitate the orthodox Jews who would once more begin to make sacrifices right before the time of the end.

To deal with the last part of verse 27, it is necessary to take a little detour.

Daniel 9:27; "For the Overspreading Of Abominations," Or "On the Wing of Abominable Things"?

In the latter part of verse 27, Daniel said, "*and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate.*" "It" here is rightly italicized because it was not in the original Hebrew and the translators wanted the readers to know it was merely added in hopes of clarifying the passage. Thus, this passage could be more literally rendered "*and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make desolate.*" But, what could this possibly mean?

My personal study of the Hebrew of the last part of verse 27 indicates this passage literally says, "*upon the wing of abominable things will come one who makes desolate.*"

Many writers, researchers, historians, and translators have made mention of the seemingly apparent enigma bound up in verse 27. Just to present a few, consider the four following quotations:

- This clause is remarkably obscure. "And upon the wing of abominations causing amazement." This is the literal translation of the place; but still there is no determinate sense. [Page 762 of *Adam Clark's Commentary on the Bible*, Abridged by Ralph Earle: Baker Book House: Michigan, 1967]
- Tregelles translates, "upon the wing of abominations shall be that which causeth desolation"; . . . [Page 757 of the revised *Commentary on the Whole Bible: Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown*. Zondervan Publishing House: Michigan, 1961.]
- But what is meant by the "*wing of abominations?*" The language is without parallel in the Old Testament, unless such passages as Ps. xviii. 10, civ. 3 are adduced where, however, the plural "wings," and not the singular is used. . . . The sense is in that case, "and upon the wing"—i.e. the pinnacle of the abominations (comp. the use Daniel's "70 Weeks" of πτερυγίου, Matt. iv. 5) is a desolator. [Page 68 of *The Book of Daniel; The Layman's Handy Commentary Series, Edited by Charles John Ellicott. The Book of Daniel by the Rev. H. Deane. B.D., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford*. Zondervan Publishing House: Michigan, 1959]
- ". . . and upon the wing of detestable things shall be that which causeth appalment;" [Page 1022 of *The Holy Scriptures; According to the Masoretic Text, A New Translation*. The Jewish Publication Society of America: Philadelphia, 1917, 1945.]

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Most interpreters have eventually—and seemingly reluctantly—settled on the notion that the Hebrew here refers to the placing of an abominable idol, or image of some sort, on a wing of the Jewish Temple yet to be built as of the writing of this study. This has become the forced rendering because the literal translation did not make sense to those writing the commentaries many years ago—some even a few hundred years ago.

However, we must bear in mind that Daniel 12:4 says, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” *Thus, God inspired Daniel to write these prophecies in a way that they could not be understood until the time near the end.* It’s almost as if God covered Daniel’s prophecies with a gelatin seal, which is slowly being melted away by the warm waters of ongoing history.

Many of the above quoted authors initially produced their work before this century. Consequently, it is naturally understood that some things would not be readily understandable by them since they were obviously not as close to the end as we would be today.

Yet, considering some events and developments of this century, my personal and somewhat limited efforts at translating this passage led me to conclude that this passage is not referring to a “wing of the Temple.” I candidly admit, however, that my resultant rendering was difficult for even me to receive—*until I found someone else who had previously arrived at a somewhat similar one.* I am referring to Arthur Pink, and something he wrote originally in 1929, and was later reproduced in his classic book entitled, *The Antichrist*. The interesting foreword of the 1979 Klock and Klock edition of this book states the following:

The writings of Arthur Walkington Pink have become popular since his death in 1952. Born in England, Pink held pastorates in Australia and in the United States, and in his later years enjoyed a widespread ministry throughout the English speaking world.

The chapters which comprise *The Antichrist* were first published in *Studies in the Scriptures*—a monthly magazine edited by Mr. Pink and devoted to the exposition of the Word. In 1923, these essays were gathered together and published in book form.

In introducing his subject matter, Pink writes:

Across the varied scenes depicted by prophecy there falls the shadows of a figure at once commanding and ominous. Under many different names, like the aliases of a criminal, his character and movements are set before us. It is our intention to write . . . concerning this one who will be the full embodiment of wickedness and the final manifestation of satanic blasphemy.

As with Darth Vader of *Star Wars*, the powerful figure of this ‘prince of darkness’ attracts attention. He represents the ‘dark side of the Force’ for he has perverted the power given him and, as the epitome of lawlessness (i.e. the Man of Sin) now seeks to extend the sphere of his influence to every corner of the universe. I reproduced the above to give you a little background about Mr. Pink and to

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show the thinking of Cyril Barber, the person who wrote the above introduction. Apparently, Mr. Barber—like me—has grown up in a generation where new attitudes and concepts can be envisioned in vivid terms that have been formed by what we have been exposed to in our own lifetime. This includes the period in which the nation of Israel miraculously became a nation again in 1948, some 2,500 years after it was brought into captivity and ceased being a sovereign nation in A.D. 70.

Like many, when I look at passages that have been seemingly obscure a few centuries back, I tend to view them technically and according to the original language first, then logically and according to context, and lastly, through the possible concepts to which I have been exposed in my lifetime. I believe this is in part what the divinely inspired prophet did in Daniel 9:2.

It also seems that Arthur Pink grasped a concept that had began to develop in his lifetime, which enable him to pierce more of the veil that had been placed over the Book of Daniel some 2,500 years ago. Amazingly, he boldly expressed his views in writing as reproduced on page 168 of his book. In considering Daniel 9:27, he wrote;

. . . Seventh, the setting up of this "image" to the Antichrist will, most probably, be attended with supernatural phenomenon. We gather this from Dan. 9:27, where we read, "And he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate". Now the word here translated "overspreading" is never so rendered elsewhere. Seventy times is this word translated "wing" or "wings". It is the word used of the wings of the cherubim in Ex. 25:20 and Ezeck. 10:5, etc. And in Psalm 18:10 we read of Jehovah that "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind.

One profound Hebrew scholar has rendered the last clause of Dan. 9:27 as follows, "And upon the wing of abominations he shall come desolating." . . .

Mr. Pink did not name his "profound Hebrew scholar." Yet, I found this rendering of this passage most remarkable. It was almost exactly the same as the one I had arrive at after much tedious work.

Mr. Pink continued the above by saying something similar to what I felt the implication of my rendering meant. He added;

. . . Remembering that "abomination" has reference to an idol or false god, the force would then be "upon the wing of a false god, he shall come desolating". Now, in view of Psa. 18:10 it is highly probable that Dan. 9:27 refers to a *satanic imitation* of the Chariot of the Cherubim. . . . If this view be correct, then the Antichrist will be supernaturally born aloft (by invisible demons), and apparently descending from on high (in blasphemous mimicry of Mal. 3:1) will finally [*sic.*] persuade the world to worship him as God. The apostate Jews will, no doubt, believe that their eyes at last behold the long-awaited sign from heaven, and the return of the glory to the Temple.

I must add that since Mr. Pink wrote the above, our own aerospace technology has produced aircraft configurations, which are simply called a "flying

wing." A couple of examples are the U.S. Navy's V-173 of the 1940s, and the stealth fighter and stealth bomber of the 1990s. Even more significant, I believe, is the nearly worldwide familiarity with the strange phenomena of unidentified flying objects (*i.e.*, UFOs), which are often simply described as being round and disk shaped. I could be mistaken, but I believe this could also qualify as a craft of a single winged design. I might add, my research indicates that the reported strange phenomenon and occultic connection with these craft fit right in with my notions as also with Mr. Pink's.

The problem with making sense out of this part of verse 27 was the idea of a one winged something carrying something. Until the latter part of the previous century, only creatures with a pair of wings were known to be able to fly. However, technology, strange and so-far unexplained phenomenon, and entertainment like *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* have changed all that. New paradigms are being formed which actually make the literal interpretation of Daniel 9:27 logically possible. There is much more to be said about this, however, it eludes the scope of this study.

In any case, regardless of what it is or how it arrives, Daniel 9:27 also states that that which is to cause "desolation" will continue until it is consumed and all the destruction determined is completed.

With the above passages considered and analyzed, I proceed to the next section, which compares the historical record with the aforementioned prophecies.

THE HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL RECORD COMPARED WITH THE PROPHECIES

Please bear in mind the following as I proceed from this point on. All chronological dates for Old Testament events have been determined by relating specific events to each historical king and reckoning the Biblically recorded events from the beginning year of their reign. Since the Jewish authors of antiquity did not use the methods we currently used to mark days and years, this is the only way dates can be determined—*not only by me—but everyone else as well.*

This is similar to a navigational system based upon "dead-reckoning." In such a system, one takes the distance, the direction, the time to travel between each point, and various recognizable guideposts to determine their present location along any planned course of travel. However, if they at some point discover they have strayed off course a little somewhere, they merely make a course correction once they reach one of the dependable guideposts. That's what I have done with the events of 446–444 B.C. Yet, everything else appears to be perfectly on course.

In using a system of dead reckoning, if one guidepost is somehow *mistaken* for another, God only knows where the navigator will end up. In like manner, *if the wrong king is selected for any given event—or the date for the beginning of his reign is incorrect—the rest of the chronology connected to that event will also be thrown off. Even worse, all the following chronology is also subject to the same errors.*

Thus, I will present the generally accepted secular names and dates of the historical kings of this period and the years of their reigns. My chief source here is

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the 1976 *Encyclopedia Britannica* with two significant alternatives affected the end of one king's reign and the beginning of the reign of the next one who came to power. Remember, the year of the reign of each one is reckoned from the time he gained control over Jerusalem.

<i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i>	Dates	My Preferred Alternatives
Nebuchadnezzar	606–561	—> (Served as the crowned prince and head of the army from 606–605.)
Cyrus II	536–529	Became king in 605.)
Cambyses	529–522	
Darius I (Hystaspis)	521–486	
Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)	486–465	—> 486–466
Artaxerxes I (Longimanus)	464–425	—> 466–425
Xerxes II	425–424	
Darius II (Nothius)	423–404	
Artaxerxes II (Mnemon)	404–359	
Artaxerxes III (Ocus)	359–338	
Arses	338–335	
Darius III	335–330	

As you can see, my only real difference is with the end of the reign of Xerxes I and the subsequent beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes I. However, I am not the only one who has questions concerning these points. Some of my sources have question marks beside these particular years indicating they are not positively sure about them either. Even my own *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* has the beginning chronological date for Nehemiah as 446, not 445. Even here, the date has a question mark beside it. Yet, some of the other chronological information in this same Bible varies considerably from mine in other places.

Due to those who originally penned the historical documents of the Jews, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans all having had their own methods of reckoning to provide us with this past information, one would have to figure out exactly when in a modern solar year a king's reign began and ended. Thus, the beginning of the year for one could actually be the ending of the year for someone else's reckoning—or vice versa. Therefore, to keep this study as simple as possible without risking the accuracy and integrity of the whole, I have taken the widely accepted dates and adjusted one questionable period by one or two years.

You may want to refer back to the above table repeatedly as you read the pages that will follow.

BABYLON BEGINS TO RULE OVER JERUSALEM

609 B.C.(?) to 597 B.C.

Jehoiakim's 11 Year Reign under Pharaoh-Necoh, Then Nebuchadnezzar

According to 2 Kings 23:29–37, King Josiah (640–609 B.C.) was killed at Megiddo by Pharaoh-necoh, the king of Egypt. The people of the land then installed Josiah's 23 year-old son, Jehoahaz, as king. However, after Jehoahaz ruled in

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Jerusalem for 3 months, the pharaoh bound him and sent him to Egypt to live the rest of his days. Once the pharaoh had deposed Jehoahaz, he then installed Josiah's 25 year-old son Eliakim as king and changed his name to Jehoiakim. History indicates Jehoiakim was installed as king in 609 B.C. and ruled for 11 years until 598 B.C.

Daniel 1:1–3 says Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it during the 3rd year of Jehoiakim's reign. Counting 3 years from 609 B.C. brings Nebuchadnezzar's siege and the conquering of Jerusalem to some time in 606 B.C. At that time, Nebuchadnezzar took part of the vessels from Solomon's Temple and carried them away to Babylon where he placed them in the house of his god, Bel or Baal. This is also the time a very young Daniel and other young ones of the royal seed were carried away into captivity in Babylon and placed in the service of King Nebuchadnezzar. In addition, 2 Kings 24:1–3 indicates that Jehoiakim remained the king of Jerusalem at the time and ruled under the dominion of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. *Thus, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon began in 606 B.C.*

2 Kings, 24:1–3 goes on to say that after serving Nebuchadnezzar for three years Jehoiakim rebelled against him. Because of the rebellion, Nebuchadnezzar eventually sent troops of Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites against Jehoiakim and regained control over Jerusalem in 598 B.C., which ended Jehoiakim's 11-year reign. Consequently, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon was only escalated when this king and some of his people were also *removed* away to Babylon. According to 2 Chronicles 36:8–10, this group would have been taken away in the 8th month and the 20th day of 598 B.C.

2 Chronicles 36:7 also indicates, that after Nebuchadnezzar had deposed Jehoiakim he took some more of the sacred vessels from the Temple and carried them away into Babylon and put them in the Temple of his god along with those he had taken 11 years earlier.

598 B.C.

Jehoiachin Rules for 3 Months And 10 Days under Nebuchadnezzar

2 Chronicles 36:8–10 then says Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin became king and ruled for 3 months and 10 days. This took place in 598 B.C. But, at the end of that year, Nebuchadnezzar also took him captive to Babylon and installed Jehoiachin's brother, Zedekiah, as king.

597 B.C. to 586 B.C.

Zedekiah Rules for 11 Years under Nebuchadnezzar

Once Jehoiachin had been carried away captive into Babylon at the end of the year, his brother Zedekiah then began serving as sub-regent under Babylonian control for the next 11 years. Consequently, his rule began at the very beginning of 597 B.C.

2 Kings 24:19 adds that Zedekiah also rebelled against God's will just as Jeremiah had prophesied, thus provoking Nebuchadnezzar by not submitting to his instructions as God had previously instructed through Jeremiah as recorded in 29:1–7, 32:1–5, and 32:26–35.

Also, Jeremiah 32:2–5 reports that Zedekiah even imprisoned the prophet Jeremiah for daring to prophesy and warn the people that God had determined for Nebuchadnezzar to successfully capture Jerusalem and her king. Thus, he was telling the people it was futile to resist the Chaldean Babylonians.

Moreover, 2 Chronicles 36:12–20 goes on to report that during the 9th year of Zedekiah's reign, he openly rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. This provoked the Babylonian king to bring the Chaldean army against Jerusalem once more.

2 Kings 25:1–2 reports that Nebuchadnezzar brought his entire army to Jerusalem and besieged it. This siege began in the 10th day of the 10th month of the 9th year of Zedekiah's reign. This was in the year 588 B.C. The siege lasted until the 9th day of the 4th month of the 11th year of Zedekiah's reign when the walls were breached and the Babylonians gained entry into Jerusalem. This was in the year 586 B.C.

Once the walls were breached after the 1 1/2 year siege, Zedekiah and his men fled the city. Zedekiah was later captured on the plains of Jericho and subsequently brought to Riblah where he was judged and his sons were slain in his presence. He was then blinded and bound with fetters and carried away into captivity into Babylon, thus ending his 11-year reign.

Once Jerusalem was breached and Zedekiah was carried away, Nebuchadnezzar sent his own man to Jerusalem to oversee things for him. For this job, Nebuchadnezzar selected Nebuzaradan who had previously proved himself as the captain of the guard in Babylon.

Upon Nebuzaradan's arrival in Jerusalem, he burned down the Temple, which utterly destroyed any sacred vessels which had remained inside. He also destroyed all the houses, great and small, in Jerusalem. Lastly, the Chaldean army then tore down the walls that surrounded the city of Jerusalem. All of this took place in 586 B.C.

Once the material destruction of the Jerusalem had been accomplished, Nebuzaradan then collected a number of people of the city and moved them to Babylon. Those taken into captivity included the rich and those who had fought and subsequently fled when the wall was breach by Nebuchadnezzar.

BABYLONIAN RULE ENDS AND MEDO-PERSIAN RULE BEGINS UNDER CYRUS THE PERSIAN AND DARIUS THE MEDE

536 B.C. to 516 B.C.

From Cyrus' Decree to the Completed Temple

According to Ezra 1:1–5, in 536 B.C. Cyrus issued a decree for Zerubbabel and others to leave Babylon and return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. Ezra 3:8 indicates that the work began 2 years later (534 B.C.) and continued for many years.

Cyrus' conquering Babylon and subsequently issuing the decree, giving Ezra and other Jews the freedom to return to Jerusalem, came exactly 70 years after Jerusalem, her king, and the first Jews fell under Babylonian domination in 606 B.C. *This is just as Jeremiah had prophesied in 25:9–12 and 29:10!*

446–397 B.C.

An Alternate Chronology: Jerusalem from the Time the Wall Was Built Until the Time the Temple and City Was Completed

According to Nehemiah 2:1–8, Artaxerxes I granted his Jewish cup-bearer permission to leave the palace at Shushan, Persia's capitol, and return to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city (446 B.C.)

However, once the wall around Jerusalem was completed, certain non-Jews in the service of the king wrote letters to him claiming the Jews had built the walls and were rebuilding the Temple planning to rebel. As a result, the work on the Temple reconstruction came to a halt. (Ezra 4:11–24) However, in 421, the Spirit of the Lord stirred up Haggai and other prophets in Jerusalem prompting very old Zerubbabel to resume the work even though he did not have official permission. (Ezra 5:1–2) Others soon joined him only to draw the attention and questions by the officiating Persian Satrap.

Zerubbabel, the prophets, and the priests all claimed that Cyrus had indeed given the Jews an official decree ordering them to rebuild the Temple 115 years earlier back in 536. They then wrote a letter to that effect to the king, Darius II, prompting him to search the official written records. (Ezra 5:13–17) Once the search was concluded, the king discovered that the Jews had spoken the truth. This king then issued a hasty decree for all help and due speed to be given to the Jews so they could finish the Temple as soon as possible. (Ezra 6:3–12) Four years later, in 417, the Temple was completed and all kings who were somehow officially involved with its progress—Cyrus II, Darius II, and Artaxerxes I—were mentioned as having given decrees which had helped in some way. (Ezra 4:14–15) Lastly, with great joy the Temple was duly dedicated. (Ezra 6:16)

Twenty years later, in 397, Artaxerxes II (Ezra 7:1–7) issued his decree for all Jews remaining in Babylon to be released and allowed to return to Jerusalem if they wished. This group was led by Ezra. A few months after arriving, various religious reforms were made, all the feasts were fully reinstated, and the wall around Jerusalem was finally dedicated.

As I alluded to earlier, some of the chronology here probably seems unique to

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many. For those who wish to see the mechanics of how I arrived at these results, see the attached, "A Chronological Analysis of the Kings Who Ruled over Jerusalem From 606–331 B.C.," which is contained in Part II. This study resulted from me not being able to fit Daniel's prophecies recorded in 9:24–26 with the recorded facts of history. After failing at many attempts to do so, and praying over the matter, I came to throw out some of the traditionally accepted chronology, which seems to have originated with the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus.

I realize many could misconstrue this as the ultimate exercise in presumptive pride. However, I assure you, the method I used, and the results are very simple and were easy to arrive at—though it did take a lot of work to represent it properly on the written page to enable the matter to be considered from an overall comparative perspective.

My initial approach, of individual linear analysis of each book in question, consistently allowed me to assign some events as to have taken place during the reign of the wrong king. Thus, like many others, I kept jumping to the wrong kingly guideposts, which repeatedly threw me off the true chronological course.

The comparative method I finally used is really quite simple. I merely pulled out my *Encyclopedia Britannica* and copied the historical names of each Persian king and the historically known date of each one's reign. Next, I took chiefly the Old Testament books of Ezra and Nehemiah—with some pertinent input from Esther, Haggai, Daniel, and Zechariah—and carefully noted all mentioned dates and names of every king throughout. I paid special attention not to overlook any king who was mentioned—no matter how small.

I was also careful to handle each reported incident either as a current event happening within the given text of the moment, or as a past event that was being related to explain the background for the current events.

In doing the above, a tight chronological flow soon developed that yielded results which have caused me to rejoice ever since. I believe that recorded history indicates that the prophecies given in Daniel 9:24–26 were *fulfilled literally and perfectly!*

For some who may not be versed in the traditionally accepted chronology of Jerusalem existing under the Persian kings, I will provide a brief overview. I will also state my reasons for believing they are partly in error.

Now the reader must bear in mind that Daniel reported that portions of his book was going to be kept closed—or, non-understandable—*until the time of the end*. (Daniel 12:4) Also bear in mind that Daniel said in the last days knowledge was going to increase. Thus, it makes sense that even Josephus would have had a difficult time understanding the specifics of Daniel's prophecies. His research material would have been somewhat more limited than what is available today due to the massive compilation, cataloguing, translation, and indexing of numerous ancient written works of historical importance, which has taken place this century. Thus, I do not believe understanding these matters is purely a matter of right methodology and mental prowess. Instead, it is a matter of timing and available research material—all superintended by the Spirit of the God of Heaven.

Pages 229–230 of *Halley's Bible Handbook* offer the following traditionally accepted chronology for the period under consideration. This chronology is typical among others. (Note; all dates are given in B.C.—and, *the following is not quoted*

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verbatim.)

- 536 Zerubbabel led the first returnees back to Jerusalem.
- 536 Zerubbabel built the alter.
- 535 Work on the Temple begun—and *stopped*.
- 520 Work renewed by Haggai and Zechariah.
- 516 Temple completed.
- 478 Esther becomes Queen of Persia.
- 457 Ezra goes from Babylon to Jerusalem.
- 444 Nehemiah rebuilds the wall. (As I have already said, some believe this date could be 446 or 445 depending upon when Artaxerxes I—also known as Longimanus—actually began his reign. In either case, I favor 446 for reasons, which will soon become apparent.)
- 432 Nehemiah returned once more from Babylon.

Among the traditionally accepted views, there are both variations and consistencies.

Among the consistencies, several believe Cyrus gave the original decree in 536 for Zerubbabel to take the first returnees to Jerusalem to begin rebuilding the Temple. Many also believe Nehemiah was commissioned in 446 to rebuild and finish the walls by Artaxerxes I. I agree on these points. Among the variations, some believe, as the late J. Vernon McGee did, that Ezra led the last returnees back to Jerusalem under Artaxerxes II in 397. I agree with point also.

However, many believe the Temple work, which had begun under Cyrus II, was stopped under the reign of Cambyses whom—for some reason—they also believe was called “Artaxerxes” or “Ahasuerus.” Consequently, they also believe the work was resumed a short time later under Darius I in 520–519 and was completed in 515. They also believe that Ezra received the decree to take the last returnees back to Jerusalem under Xerxes I in 478 or Artaxerxes I in 457. I disagree with this for reasons to be stated shortly.

First, the first historically recorded Persian king named “Artaxerxes” which reigned during this period was Artaxerxes I, not Cambyses. Thus, the earliest possible year for Nehemiah to have built the wall around Jerusalem would have to have been 20 years from the beginning of the reign of Artaxerxes I (*i.e.*, 446). This is probably why almost everyone agrees on this particular point in the Jewish chronology.

Next, it seems many have overlooked some small—but, significant—facts that shows specifically which kings were involved, the actual chronology, and the *specific reason* the king halted the work on the Temple which had been going on since 534.

Ezra 4:3–6 says Cyrus (536–529) began the work on the Temple. It also shows the sequence of successive kings from Cyrus that became involved with the Temple in some way or another. Verses 5 and 6 shows that the sequence from Cyrus skipped Cambyses and proceeded through Darius I (521–485) unto Ahasuerus (or Xerxes I).

Xerxes I (485–466) was the first to receive a written complaint about the Jews work to rebuild the temple. Yet, Ezra indicates that the work on the Temple continued unhindered, possibly due to the favor the Jews had gained from Ahasuerus who had

taken the beautiful Jewess, Esther, as his Queen in his 7th year (478, Esther 2:16). In the 12th year of his reign, she courageously stood up for her people and delivered them from Haman's plot (473, Esther 3:7, 12, 5:1, and 9:15–17).

The next successive king mentioned by Ezra is found in 4:7–24. This passage *says that some non-Jewish leaders wrote a letter, in Syrian, to a king named "Artaxerxes." It claimed that the Jews in Jerusalem were planning to use the recently raised "WALLS" to rebel against the Persians (4:12). Therefore, since the walls were not raised under Cambyses, Darius I, or Xerxes I, the work on the Temple could not have been halted until sometime in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes I (466–425)—who actually gave Nehemiah the official permission to rebuild the city—beginning with the wall (Nehemiah 2:5). Thus, the work on the wall could not have been begun and finished until 446. Lastly, Cambyses only reigned for 7 years from 529–522. So, nothing could have been accomplished in the 20th year of Cambyses because there was no such year in his reign!*

These very simple, but very significant points of reference, affect the real time chronology from Ezra 5:1 and Nehemiah 8:1 to the end of their accounts.

To strengthen this position further, Nehemiah stated that after the wall had been completed (446), he appointed some faithful men to watch over and guide the rest of the city while it was being reconstructed (Nehemiah 7:1–3). He then called for a census so the people would know to which cities surrounding Jerusalem they belonged according to their inherited ancestry as had been determined in chapters 26–36 of Numbers. Nehemiah also knew that most of the people were not going to remain in the city itself *because the houses had not yet been built in Jerusalem.* (Nehemiah 7:4–5)

Since Nehemiah's main job of rebuilding the walls were finished, and the people themselves now had the task of rebuilding the houses, and since not many people remained in the desolated interior of the city of Jerusalem itself at the time, there was nothing to keep him from returning to Persia per his original agreement with the king. Yet, it does seem he continued to serve as the governor of Jerusalem in absentia.

In any case, the census was taken and Nehemiah returned to Shushan to Artaxerxes I, just as he had promised (2:6 & 13:6). The people scattered to live in the cities surrounding Jerusalem (7:73) while the rest of the city—including the Temple—was still undergoing reconstruction. However, Nehemiah did return to Jerusalem sometime later and was there when Ezra and the last returnees arrived. (Nehemiah 13:6–7)

Whether Nehemiah remained in Jerusalem in 446, or returned to serve Artaxerxes I in Shushan, as I tend to believe, does not affect the chronology of the events here. Yet, if Nehemiah had still been in Jerusalem and serving as governor when the king received the letter that claimed that the Jews were planning a rebellion, the king could have viewed Nehemiah as the chief troublemaker.

At the very least, the king may have considered Nehemiah a contributor or perhaps as approving of the rebellion. In any case, it is likely the king would not only have stopped the work on the Temple as he actually did, but he probably would have removed Nehemiah from the position of governor—at the very least. At the worse, the king could have dealt more severely with him as one who was committing treason against Persia and her king.

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However, if Nehemiah was no longer in Jerusalem, but instead at the king's side when the letter actually arrived, the king may have thought that a few religious zealots had gotten a little too enthusiastic since the walls were built. Thus, he would have likely decided to calm things down awhile, just as Ezra 4:21 seems to indicate.

On the other hand, if the king had received the letter and stopped the work on the Temple *before* he had commissioned Nehemiah to go and rebuild the city; chances are that he would have never been so gracious toward Nehemiah's wishes to rebuild the city in the first place. Thus, caution alone could have prevented the king from granting Nehemiah's request. Therefore, I believe it was shortly after Nehemiah finished the wall and returned to Shushan that the letter of complaint was written to Artaxerxes I.

Again, the letter made allegations that the walls that had been built by the people he had sent (Ezra 4:12), and the Temple and city currently under construction, were going to serve as a basis for a Jewish rebellion. In response to the critical letter, and possibly being somewhat embarrassed for letting his favorable attitude toward his Jewish cup-bearer lead him to give official permission to rebuild the wall in the first place, the king ordered the work stopped until further notice (Ezra 4:24). Consequently, it seems that up into the 20th year of his reign, Artaxerxes I had been favorable to the idea of rebuilding of both Jerusalem and the Temple—until troublemakers made it a divisive political issue later on. Whether it was caution, embarrassment, or simple political correctness, the king demanded a temporary halt to all building activities on the Temple.

The next successive king mentioned in Ezra is "Darius" (also in 4:24), who would historically be Darius II. It was during the reign of this king, that the prophets—including Haggai and Zechariah—prompted Zerubbabel to take courage and resume the work (Ezra 5:1–2). Zerubbabel was the governor at the time (Haggai 1:1).

The renewed activity on the Temple caught the attention of the Persian Satrap, Tatnai, who asked where they had gotten the authority to resume the work (Ezra 5:3). The Jews defended their actions by saying that Cyrus II had actually made a written decree to that effect back in 536. The Satrap then took a letter from the Jew's stating their claims to Darius II.

The king ordered an immediate search of the official records—which resulted in the rediscovery of Cyrus' original decree, just as the Jews working on the Temple had claimed in their letter (5:17–6:5). Darius II immediately issued a hasty decree that all help and due speed was to be given to the Jews so that they could complete the Temple as soon as possible (6:12). The Temple was completed Four years later (6:15). The Temple was duly dedicated (6:16–22) and the Jews began keeping the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as best as they could. (For some reason, Zerubbabel's name was mysteriously dropped from the record of current events from this point on as covered in both Ezra and Nehemiah.)

Consequently, the Temple must have been finished and dedicated in the 6th year of Darius II, not Darius I. This means the Temple was completed in 417, not 515.

After the Temple was completed, the next successive king made a decree for Ezra to lead the last willing captive Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem (7:1–13). The next historical king after Darius II was Artaxerxes II—not Xerxes I. Thus, the 7th year (7:7)

of Artaxerxes II brings the year to 397—not 478.

When Ezra arrived, he spoke of the Temple, the Wall, and the other “desolations” of the city as having been repaired. (9:5–9) *This indicates that significant time had passed since the Wall had been finished when the Temple and houses of the city still laid in ruins. To be exact, “49” prophetic years had passed.*

At this point, the accounts in Nehemiah 8:1 on and Ezra 7:1 on seem to overlap concerning the events occurring in 397. The account in Ezra seems to focus on the people, their sins, and the ensuing reforms. Nehemiah also focused on these points, but also added that the houses of the city had by then been built up (Nehemiah 8:16). He also reported that the people had begun to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the correct manner for the first time since the days of Joshua the son of Nun. This indicated the Temple and the individual houses were finished (8:16–18). The account in Nehemiah also states that one-tenth of the people then volunteered to live in the recently finished city. (Chapter 11)

Lastly, the account in Nehemiah reports that the “walls” of the city, essentially the city itself, was finally dedicated at that time—that is—sometime after the 24th day of the 7th month in 397 (12:27–47). [I believe The actual date of the dedication could have occurred around the 20th day of the 8th month.]

In light of the above, I believe the proper important dates to adopt are:

- 606 The beginning of the Jewish captivity in Babylon.
- 586 The destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem.
- 536 The initial decree which began the end of the captivity.
- 534 The beginning of the construction of Zerubbabel's Temple.
- 446 The decree to rebuild the walls and the subsequent cessation of the work on the Temple.
- 434 Nehemiah's rule as governor over Jerusalem ends.
- 421 Zerubbabel was already serving as governor. Perhaps he was given this office after Nehemiah's term expired in 434. In any case, the Temple construction resumed at this time.
- 417 The Temple was completed and dedicated.
- 397 The last Jews in captivity were returned to Jerusalem (including Nehemiah?) effectively ending the captivity. And, the Wall of Jerusalem and essentially the city itself were officially dedicated.

The above chronology does raise the two following questions.

First, if Zerubbabel laid the foundation of the Temple in 536 and saw it through to its completion in 417 according to Zechariah 4:6–8, he would have had to survive to a very old age. According to Matthew 1:12, Zerubbabel had been born in Babylon—just as his name actually means. If we suppose that he had been some 20 years old when he returned to Jerusalem, he would have had to be at least 139 year old when the Temple was completed.

Though such an old age was indeed unusual, it was not impossible. Even today, reports occasionally come in that make claims of very old people living well into the 100's.

As a pertinent note of interest, during the initial preparation of this document, I purchased the March 18, 1996 copy of *Time International*. On page nine was

the small story of **Maria Do Carmo Geronimo of Carmo de Minas** (Rio?). The article reported how she **celebrated her 125th birthday** according to her certificate of baptism.

Believer it or not, there is another more widely known report of someone who lived some thirty years more than Maria did! His name is Thomas Parr. His story has been related repeatedly on the *Discovery Channel*, as well as the official website of the Westminster Abbey in Great Britain.

The Westminster Abbey is a very old church that has served as the crowning place of English monarchs beginning in 1066 with William the Great. It also provided burial places for some monarchs and other distinguished ones until 1760. Among the notables that are entombed there are the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, the physicist, Isaac Newton¹ — and Thomas Parr.

Thomas Parr was born in Sallop County, in 1483. He outlived two wives and lived through the reigns of ten princes. Finally, he was buried in the Westminster Abbey on November 15, 1635—*at 152 plus years of age!* You can read a more full account at the abbey's own website at:

<http://www.westminster-abbey.org/library/burial/parr.htm>.

Such longevity in the last millennium is certainly unusual — but not impossible. Thus, I believe the possibility of such old age in Ezra's time, some 2.5 millennia ago, is no more impossible than it is today.

In addition, it also seems that God has a way of granting extremely long life to chosen individuals if it serves His purpose, and glorifies Him as the One actually accomplishing a notable deed worthy of His praise. Examples are found with Abraham (Genesis 15:15 & 25:7, [175 years]), Jacob (Genesis 47:9 [130 years]), Moses (Deuteronomy 34:7 [120 years]), Job (42:16 [140+years]), and even Simeon and Anna in the New Testament (Luke 2:25–37, Simeon's age was not given, but Anna was 84).

Moreover, in Zachariah 8:4, it seems the Lord actually promised that some of a "very" old age would be living in Jerusalem after the city was finished. It also seems that Zerubbabel was on the verge of giving up on seeing the Temple completed—*perhaps because of his old age*. Thus, the Lord told Zerubbabel the Temple for which he had laid the foundation was also going to be finished by his hands. Yet, it would not be accomplished by Zerubbabel's physical strength or vitality, but God's spirit who would finish the task (Zachariah 4:6–8). This was much like Abraham, who had at one point given up on he and Sara producing a child because of their old age (Genesis 17:17).

Thus, even though I believe it would be remarkable for Zerubbabel to have lived so long and survived until the Temple was finished, I do not believe it would be impossible or improbable, just as the Lord reminded Abraham and Sara in their day (Genesis 18:14).

Lastly, some may believe that taking 119 years to build the Temple was too long a period. Yet, in John 2:20 the Jews of A.D. 27 told Jesus that the current Temple had been under reconstruction for 46 years, since it had begun under the direction of Herod the Great in 19 B.C. I must point out that Herod had ready access to materials and laborers, and *no one to oppose his efforts*. The Jews of Zerubbabel's time were not so

blessed. Thus, I do not believe it was unreasonable for the Jews to take 119 years to build an inferior Temple.

Now, if this chronology is correct, as I believe it to be, the remainder of this study will take on miraculous significance.

From 19 B.C. to A.D. 30 and the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

The historical records indicate that Herod the Great—an Idumean who was also considered half-Jewish by some—took it upon himself to restore the inferior Temple that had been built from 536 B.C. until and finished in 417 B.C. According to Flavius Josephus, it was Herod's desire to restore the Temple to its original glory as originally built by Solomon (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XV, Chapter XI, and Section 1).

In Section 2, Josephus continued to relate how Herod prepared 1000 wagons for hauling stone; 10,000 of the most skilled workers, and 1000 sacerdotal garments for the priests who would train the stonemasons and carpenter for this special job.

The sources I have place the beginning of Herod the Great's reign at 37 B.C. Josephus states that Herod gave a speech that issued a decree to restore the Temple to its Solomon-like splendor in the 18th year of his reign—which would have been 19 B.C. The main part of this Temple was completed in 9 years. However, restoration and construction of other buildings connected with it continued for some 70 years. It was completed circa A.D. 62–63.

This Temple is the only one Jesus ever visited or of which He spoke. Also according to the historical records, this same Temple was later destroyed by the Roman General, Titus, in A.D. 70.

Furthermore, and according to John 2:13–23, Jesus went to Jerusalem to keep the Passover in the first year of His public ministry. There the Jews reminded Him how the Temple—begun by Herod—had been 46 years in construction up to that point in time. A little earlier this same year, Jesus had been baptized, and He later kept the first recorded Passover since He had begun His public ministry. Lastly, Luke 3:23 says that Jesus was baptized and began the 1st year of His public ministry when He was "about thirty years" of age.

John also records two other *clearly* mentioned yearly Passovers in 6:4 and 13:1–3. However, many scholars and some manuscript copies indicate one additional Passover was also mentioned in John 5:1. Thus, on the 4th Passover, and 3 years after being told the Temple had been undergoing restoration for 46 years, Jesus was crucified. This means the Temple was some 49 years old when the Messiah was *cut off*. It also means Jesus was 33 years of age when He was crucified.

If the date of Herod initially making his decree to restore the Jewish Temple is correct—and this date is used as a basis for calculating the birth of Jesus Christ—Jesus would have been born in what we call 3 B.C. and crucified in April of A.D. 30. Interestingly, Matthew 2:16 reports that Herod sought to kill Jesus when He was only 2 years of age. Thus, the resulting slaughter of all boys of 2 years of age and under in Bethlehem would have occurred sometime in 1 B.C., which would have been right before the later accepted historical date for Herod's sickly demise and ensuing

miserable death. (*Antiquities*, Book XVII, Chapters VI–VIII.) The earlier historically accepted date of Herod's death is 4 B.C.

One could make reasonable arguments for the validity of both dates. However, some base the earlier date of 4 B.C. mainly upon Josephus' claim that an eclipse of the moon occurred right before Herod died. In Book XVII, Chapter VI, and Sections 1–4 of *Antiquities*, Josephus did report that Herod had been sick sometime before such an eclipse, but became much worse on the very night of it, and supposedly died a little while later. However, some also say a more prominent eclipse occurred some time during the latter part of 1 B.C. Thus, one can build a case to show that Herod may have died near the end of 1 B.C. or even a little later.

In addition, Luke 1:24–36 indicates that Elizabeth conceived John the Baptist and hid herself for 5 months. It also indicates the angel Gabriel told Mary of her impending miraculous conception *in either the "6th" month of Elizabeth's pregnancy— or better yet—the 6th month of the year*. In those days, Mary came to Elizabeth with John the Baptist—still in the womb—and the unborn child instantly knew Mary and rejoiced because she had recently conceived just as Gabriel told her she would.

If the 6th month described above was Elizabeth's 6th month of pregnancy, then it is nearly impossible to know more about the time of Jesus' birth. However, if the month in mention was also the 6th month *of the year*, it would have been the month Elul, which corresponds to our August and September. If this is the case, then Jesus would have been born some 9 months later during Nisan and Iyar which corresponds to our April and May. This would have been right around the time of the Passover and during the feast of weeks, just as John 2:12–23 and Luke 3:23, 4:1–2, 14–16, 28–31 seem to indicate, and also reported that Jesus was about 30 years of age.

Special Information Before Historically Considering the Last Passage of Daniel 9:24–27

In order to benefit fully from this study, it is necessary for the reader to have the proper understanding of prophetic time references. It is also necessary for all time standards concerning prophecy to be treated in their proper context, interpretation, and application as they were *originally* given, and as they were *originally* meant to be understood. *Without observing these points, the correct understanding of Daniel 9:24–27 is practically impossible.* The points for consideration are enumerated as follows:

Time Base Measurement Standards for Biblical Prophecy

One actual solar year equals 365 days, 6 hours, and 9 minutes, and 9.54 seconds. However, for all intents and purposes, the modern solar year can be treated as being 365.25 days long.

Dividing the actual solar year by 12 months indicates that each actual solar month actually equals 30.4375 days. However, a prophetic Jewish year equals 360 days and one prophetic Jewish month equals 30 days such as is depicted in Revelation 11:2–3 where 42 months are equated with 1260 days, with each month representing 30 days.

Thus, to convert Jewish prophetic years to actual solar years, multiply each

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Jewish prophetic year by 360 and divide the product by 365.25. In considering the specific time period numerated in Daniel 9:24–27, note the following:

1 week of sevens equals 7 prophetic years, which equals;

$7 \times 360 = 2520 / 365.25 = 6.899$ actual solar years.
[6 years, 328.35 days or 6 years, 10 months, and 23.97 days.]

7 weeks of sevens equal 49 prophetic years, which equals;

$49 \times 360 = 17640 / 365.25 = 48.296$ actual solar years.
[48 years, 107.99 days or 48 years, 3 months, and 16.687 days.]

62 weeks of sevens equals 434 prophetic years, which equals;

$434 \times 360 = 156,240 / 365.25 = 427.76$ actual solar years.
[427 years, 277.59 days or 427 years, 9 months, and 3.6 days.]

Conversion of Jewish prophetic weeks and years, to solar years.

Running Totals

Prophetic weeks	Indicated prophetic years	Converted to solar years
7	49	48 years, 3 months, and 16.687 days
<u>62</u>	<u>434</u>	<u>427 years, 9 months, and 3.6 days</u>
69	483	476 years, 0 months, and 20.287 days

Plus the last delayed period, the final week:

<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6 years, 10 months, and 23.97 days</u>
70	490	482 years, 10 months, and 43.97 days

The Final Analysis

In light of all the above, the following notable points stands out.

First, in 446.01805 B.C. (if the exact date was the 6th day of the 1st month), Nehemiah was given permission to leave Shushan in Persia and travel to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. The street was also rebuilt as well. 48.295687 solar years (49 prophetic years of 7 weeks of 7's) later, the city was finished and the wall was dedicated in 397.72237 if it was the 20th day of the 8th month. *This is the perfect fulfillment of Daniel 9:25!*

Next, from 397.72237 (or the 20th day or the 8th month?) Jerusalem survived as it had been dedicated for the next 427.7618 (or 427 years, 9 months, and 4.248 days)

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very troublesome solar years (again, 434 prophetic years of 62 weeks of 7's). This brings us historically to A.D. 30.03943 (or the 14th day of the 1st month of A.D. 30)—the historically perfect date of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ when the Anointed One, i.e., the Messiah, was to be "cut off," according to Daniel 9:26!

In either case, on the Passover of A.D. 30, Jesus offered His sinless body and blood as the Paschal Lamb as payment for the sins of the world—and *not for His own benefit*. In doing so, the Mighty God of Isaiah 9 has reconciled Himself to those who were previously alienated from Him.

As the historical record bears out, 40 years after Jesus' Crucifixion *and resurrection*, Jerusalem was destroyed by a "flood" of Roman soldiers. And, since then there have been wars and destructions. However, in 1948 Israel miraculously became a nation once more.

Obviously, Daniel 9:27 is still yet to be fulfilled. One more prophetic week of 7's and another Temple yet remains to come to pass. Remember, no one but God knew when Artaxerxes I was going to issue the command for the wall of Jerusalem and the rest of the city to be rebuilt, which signaled the beginning of the first 69 weeks. Likewise, no one can know when this last week and the reign of the prince of desolation will begin until the specific events marking its beginning actually occur.

In light of current events, I often find myself wondering if Daniel's last week could be rapidly approaching at this very hour! What about you?

Those who read and believe the Hebrew prophets of old, are told by Zachariah 12:8–14 and also Revelation 1:7, that the troubled Jews living at the close of this last week—and the rest of the Gentile world—will look upon the "Lord" whom they have pierced and they will mourn for Him as for their first born child.

The first time the Messiah came, he looked over Jerusalem and wept as He lamented with overcoming sadness;

“ . . . If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” (Luke 19:41–44) [bold emphasis mine]

God's prophets have said the next time the Messiah comes, things will be different!

Blessed be the Jewish prophets, the Jewish people, the city of Jerusalem, the nation of Israel—and the Jewish Messiah who came, died, and was resurrected almost 1966 solar years (i.e. 1994 prophetic Jewish years) ago! And, blessed is the same Messiah who will come again—perhaps soon—and “seal up” the visions and the prophecies of Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zachariah, and all the others yet unfulfilled.

It is at the end of this last week that all transgressions against Jerusalem and the Chosen people of God will be finished. It also the time the nation of Israel will be reconciled to the *ALMIGHTY GOD of heaven*. And, to top it off, the Messiah will then set up His new Kingdom on Earth, with Jerusalem—and its Temple, which will yet to

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be built (Ezekiel chapters 40–42)—as it's perfect Theocratic and political center which will literally bring an end to sin.

Lastly and ultimately, the "Glory of God" will fill the Temple (Ezekiel 43:1–5) for the first time since the times of Solomon's Temple. This will result in everlasting righteousness, peace, and good will upon Earth. (Ezekiel 43:6–9)

If the Hebrew prophets and the historical records are trustworthy as I believe they are, then each who understands this may rightly conclude that Yeshua Messiah, (i.e., Jesus Christ) and His teachings are suddenly all important and worthy of reception by all.

For any who wish to do so, I recommend studying and acting according to John 3:16, Romans 10:9–10, and Ephesians 2:8–9, which was written by the Jewish prophets of the resurrected Messiah some 1,900 years ago.

Walter T. Robinson II
April 14, 1998

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Notes:

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WTRII

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